



PRESS RELEASE

Kentucky Folklife Festival Returns to the Capitol City



Photo: Traditional art forms like chaircaning are found throughout the three-day festival. (Photo courtesy of the Kentucky Historical Society, Folklife Program)

The Kentucky Folklife Festival returns to Frankfort September 25-27, with new improvements and old favorites! The event, the state's largest celebration of Kentucky traditions and cultures, attracts citizens from across the state, including up to 10,000 schoolchildren.

This year's festival will feature seven stages, multiple "jamming" areas and exciting new components such as Community Crossroads and hands-on workshops.

"This year we are putting on a festival that you just don't want to miss," said folklife specialist Brent Bjorkman. "Visitors of all ages will find many fun and engaging activities to enjoy while they learn about the diversity and creativity of the people who call Kentucky home," he said. "Our hope is that visitors and demonstrators alike will come away from the festival with a better understanding of themselves, their neighbors, and their communities."

Centered as always at the Old State Capitol, the festival will expand in 2003 to the streets of downtown Frankfort, enabling Kentuckians to experience the heart of their capitol city.

On St. Clair Street, visitors will find skilled woodcarvers, building artists, and a stage featuring music and dance traditions. Restaurants on St. Clair Street will be open during the festival, showcasing traditional Kentucky foods.

Broadway will be the site of folklife demonstrations highlighting the state's communities along Dixie Highway (U.S. 31W), from the traditions of the Mammoth Cave area to Bowling Green's once-thriving African American community, Shake Rag. Also included will be participants representing the basket making of south central Kentucky, recreational traditions of the YMCA and educational activities provided by the Kentucky Derby Museum.

The Kentucky River venue at Frankfort's Riverview Park will feature occupational and recreational folklife, tents devoted to the folklore and folklife of farming, the river and Kentucky families. Visitors to the site can learn about stonewall masonry and will be able to observe the 2003 Kentucky Rolly Hole Marble Championship. And guided historical tours will be added to the boat rides that have been a mainstay of past festivals.

A highlight of the river site will be re-creation of a bluegrass music festival, complete with "parking lot picking" and campers. Workshops will be offered on Saturday by bluegrass musicians who will perform on the main stage at Saturday evening's *Bluegrass in the Bluegrass* tribute to J.D. Crowe. Included will be vocal instruction with Dale Ann Bradley and Coon Creek, a vocal and mandolin session with Don Rigsby, and a banjo-playing workshop with J.D. Crowe himself. Whether you are a lifetime fan of bluegrass or just interested in learning what all the fuss is about, you are sure to enjoy the atmosphere at the river.

Back downtown on the grounds of the Old State Capitol, visitors will find an exciting new component, *Community Crossroads*. This area will introduce visitors to several of Kentucky's communities—or folk groups—representing specific commonalities, including the Carcassonne community of Letcher County, Latinos from Mexico, Cuba and Puerto Rico, Louisvillians with roots in India and members of the deaf and hard-of-hearing communities.

Each of these folk groups will provide demonstrations, performances and special events highlighting the cultural expressions that make them unique while providing perspective on the similarities among various folk groups.

The Old Capitol lawn will be *the* place to find representatives of Kentucky's diverse foodways traditions. Visitors will have the chance to experience a re-created version of Frankfort's La Chiquita

Mexican restaurant and market, a sampling of the burgoo tradition that has simmered many a political event and the ever-popular barbecue fare of Owensboro's St. Mary Magdalene Church.

Of course the Old Capitol lawn will once again be the site of the evening concerts that have become a favorite feature of the Kentucky Folklife Festival. Friday night will provide visitors with *A Chance to Dance!* following afternoon workshops exploring Latino and Appalachian dance traditions, as well as those of India.

The festival will conclude on Saturday night with *Bluegrass in the Bluegrass*, a tribute to J.D. Crowe. The lineup will include such bluegrass greats as Don Rigsby, Dale Ann Bradley and Coon Creek, in addition to J.D. Crowe and the New South. It will be an evening of music you won't want to miss.

The festival is a program of the Kentucky Historical Society and Kentucky Arts Council, agencies of Kentucky State Government's Education, Arts and Humanities Cabinet and showcases the continuing efforts of the Kentucky Folklife Program to document, conserve, and promote the state's folk traditions. There is no general admission charge, but there are fees for some festival activities such as boat rides. Donations are accepted and appreciated.

For more information about the Kentucky Folklife Festival, visit the website folklife.ky.gov or call, toll free, 1-877-4HISTORY (1-877-444-7867).

- 30 -

Contact:
Kim Lady Smith, ext. 4473
Kentucky Historical Society
100 West Broadway
Frankfort, KY 40601
502-564-1792
502-564-4701
folklife.ky.gov
history.ky.gov